

Message Text

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47

ACTION NEA-12

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USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION PRESS REVIEW DEC 7

1. KISSINGER'S NEWS CONFERENCE RECEIVES PROMINENT PRESS
PLAY; EMPHASIS ON HIS OPTIMISM THAT GENEVA PEACE CONFERENCE
WILL CONVENE AS PLANNED. MAARIV (HARIF) SAYS ISRAEL HAS
38- CLAUSE DRAFT AGREEMENT WHICH WOULD BECOME BASIS FOR
PEACE SETTLEMENT WITH EGYPT. SPECULATION ON EGYPTIAN-
UNCLASSIFIED

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SYRIAN INTENTIONS IN MAINTAINING TENSION ALONG CEASEFIRE
LINES REMAINS CHIEF MEDIA TOPIC. DAVAR (OFFER) SAYS MUTUAL
SUSPICION MIGHT LEAD TO MAJOR BORDER INCIDENTS. US SUPPORT
FOR ISRAEL IS COMMENTARY TOPIC. HAARETZ (SCHWEITZER) BELIEVES

US REVERTS TO SEEKING ADDITIONAL MEANS TO MAINTAIN QUIET IN REGION WHENEVER IT DOUBTS ISRAEL'S MILITARY ABILITY TO BALANCE ARAB-SOVIET THREAT. RESERVE GENERAL HERZOG (FOR HAARETZ) URGES ISRAEL TO DISCUSS PROBLEM OF PALESTINIANS WITH JORDAN BEFORE PEACE CONFERENCE.

2. KISSINGER'S NEWS CONFERENCE: YEDIOT AHARONOT (INDEPENDENT) (GUINEY) COMMENTS: " KISSINGER'S STATEMENT, ON US POSITION AND THE MIDDLE EAST WERE REASSURING...HOWEVER, HIS HINTS ON THE POSITION OF THE USSR WERE LESS REASSURING... HE WAS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE OPENING OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE...AND EXPRESSED VIEWS SIMILAR TO DAYAN...THAT THE ISSUE OF TROOP DISENGAGEMENT WILL BE DISCUSSED AT THE CONFERENCE... REGARDING THE USSR, KISSINGER EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT THE SOVIET UNION MIGHT SUPPORT EXTREMIST ARAB VIEWS IN THE COURSE OF THE CONFERENCE...HE ALSO STATED THAT THE SOVIETS ARE PRESSING FOR A US-SOVIET FORCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST... THE SOVIETS ARE ASPIRING TO MAINTAIN MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE AREA... THE US DOES NOT WANT THE SOVIETS TO MAINTAIN THE SOLE PRESENCE.. WHICH MEANS.. AMERICA MIGHT BE FORCED TO SPEND TROOPS HERE-- EVEN THOUGH THIS IS NOT DESIRABLE FOR ISRAEL."

3. PEACE CONFERENCE: (A) DAVAR (HISTADRUT) (ESHED) WRITES: " IT MIGHT BECOME VERY DIFFICULT TO ADVANCE TOWARD AN ISRAELI ARAB PEACE SETTLEMENT AT THE GENEVA PEACE CONFERENCE WITHOUT A PRIOR ISRAELI-SOVIET UNDERSTANDING ON A NUMBER OF KEY QUESTION...WITHOUT SUCH AN UNDERSTANDING IT WILL BE HARD TO BE REASONABLY CERTAIN ABOUT... ISRAEL'S SECURITY BORDERS, ISRAEL'S DETERRENT POWER, SUFFICIENT STRATEGIC DEPTH...AND CREDIBLE INTERNATIONAL GUARANTEES...THE USSR HAS MANY MEANS--BOTH IN POLITICAL AND MILITARY SPHERES---CAPABLE OF JEOPARDIZING ISRAEL'S SECURITY..."

(B) WRITING FOR HAARETZ (INDEPENDENT) GENERAL HERZOG COMMENTS: " THE SOVIET-ARAB INITIATIVE ON THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION CREATED PROBLEMS FOR ISRAEL AND JORDAN... IT POSES GREAT DANGER TO KING HUSSEIN'S REGIME... A COMMON INTEREST HAS NOW BEEN CREATED BETWEEN ISRAEL AND JORDAN... THERE IS ROOM FOR ISRAEL UNCLASSIFIED

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TO ENTER INTO NEGOTIATIONS WITH JORDAN...WITHOUT THE SOVIETS AND NOT TO WAIT FOR A LESS CONVENIENT SITUATION AT THE PEACE CONFERENCE (WHEN SOVIETS WILL BE PRESENT)."

(C) WRITING FOR YEDIOT AHARONOT ARAB AFFAIRS SPECIALIST HARKABI SUGGEST: "... EVERY EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO HAVE EXTREME ARAB DEMANDS COME TO THE FORE AT THE PEACE CONFERENCE... THIS WILL HELP ISRAEL JUSTIFY ITS DEMAND FOR SECURE BORDERS...ISRAEL'S REQUIREMENTS COULD BE JUSTIFIED IF... ARAFAT DECLARES AT THE CONFERENCE THAT HE ACTUALLY WANTS THE DESTRUCTION OF ISRAEL... I AM NOT SURE THAT GENEVA WILL RESULT IN A PEACE SETTLEMENT... HOWEVER, WE SHOULD TRY...IF PEACE COMES, GOOD, IF NOT, ISRAEL SHOULD BUILD ITS FUTURE ..(AND) SOCIAL STRUCTURE ON NEED TO MAINTAIN MILITARY RESERVE FOR A CONTINUOUS PERIOD

OF TIME..."

(D) HAARETZ (ARNES) COMMENTS: "... ONE OF THE FUNDAMENTAL CONDITIONS FOR MAINTAINING STABILITY IN THE REGION... IS THE LACK OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR ARAB ARMIES TO ACHIEVE SUBSTANTIAL MILITARY GAINS... WHO EVER IS LOOKING FORWARD TO THE GENEVA PEACE CONFERENCE SHOULD REMEMBER THAT BORDERS ARE ONE OF THE PILLARS OF THE SECURITY OF THE STATE... ANY SIGNIFICANT STRATEGIC CONCESSION WOULD, OF NECESSITY, INCREASE INSTABILITY IN THE REGION..."

4. BORDER SITUATION: PRESS CONTINUES TO NOTE HIGH STATE OF ALERT ON ALL BORDERS, INCLUDING JORDAN. COMMENTATORS STRESS NEED TO MAINTAIN ALERT, NOTWITHSTANDING SLIM POSSIBILITY THAT ALL-OUT CONFRONTATION WILL FLARE. JERUSALEM POST EDITORIALIZES: "...THE REAL QUESTION RAISED BY EGYPT'S MILITARY MOVES IS NOT SIMPLY WHETHER EGYPT IS IN FACT SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING A RENEWAL OF FIGHTING NOW--ISRAEL IS FULLY PREPARED FOR THAT EVENTUALITY--BUT WHETHER CONTINUOUS MILITARY THREAT IS GOING TO BE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE EGYPTIAN POSTURE IF AN WHEN THE GENEVA TALKS GET UNDER WAY...ISRAEL HAS GEARED ITSELF FOR THAT EVENTUALITY...BUT SUCH AN EGYPTIAN STANCE WOULD NOT PROMOTE THE KIND OF ATMOSPHERE NECESSARY FOR GENUINE PEACE TALKS."

5. US-ISRAELI RELATIONS: (A) NOTING IMPORTANCE OF US SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL AND IMPRESSING SIGNIFICANCE OF US ECONOMIC, MILITARY AND POLITICAL ASSISTANCE, HAARETZ (SCHWEITZER) ADDS: "THE US PRESENT POLICY TOWARD ISRAEL IS NOT A NEW ONE...WHenever A DOUBT ARISES REGARDING THE MILITARY ABILITY OF ISRAEL TO UNCLASSIFIED

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BALANCE THE ARAB-SOVIET COALITION...THE US TENDENCY TO BUILD THE STABILITY IN THE REGION ON ELEMENTS OTHER THAN ISRAEL'S MILITARY SUPERIORITY...GAINS FORCE. REGARDING A US GUARANTEE FOR ISRAEL'S SECURITY...TWO COMMENTS SEEM IN ORDER: (A) SUCH A GUARANTEE IS NON ON THE AGENDA FOR THE TIME BEING... (B) IF AND WHEN IT BECOMES PRACTICAL (A US GUARANTEE) WILL NOT BE EASILY GIVEN...BUT IF IT IS GIVEN THE US WILL TAKE IT SERIOUSLY...IT IS CLEAR THAT ISRAEL'S SECURITY MUST BE BASED ON OUR ABILITY TO DEFEND OURSELVES, HOWEVER, WE CANNOT SEE THE TERRITORIAL COMPONENT AS THE PRIMARY ELEMENT..." (B) MAARIV (HARIF) WRITES: "...ISRAEL HAS LEARNED FROM WASHINGTON THAT...THE US COMMITMENT TO MAINTAIN ISRAEL'S SECURITY IS STILL VALID...REGARDING US SUPPORT IN THE COURSE OF THE PEACE CONFERENCE, WHEN IT COMES TO DISCUSSIONS ON MATTERS WHICH ISRAEL VIEWS AS VITAL...KISSINGER DETERMINED: THAT THE US WILL SUPPORT REASONABLE ISRAELI POSITIONS...THE QUESTION REMAINS (WHAT DOES KISSINGER) CONSIDER 'REASONABLE'...ISRAEL IS GOING INTO THE UNKNOWN...ALL THAT WASHINGTON CAN TELL US NOW--AS THE US DEPUTY SECRETARY SAID IN JERUSALEM LAST WEEK--IS THAT MUTUAL CONFIDENCE BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND JERUSALEM SHOULD EXIST..."

4. ISRAELI PEACE PLAN: MAARIV (HARIF) WRITES: "IN THE COURSE

OF CONSULTATIONS HELD THIS WEEK IN JERUSALEM...IN ANTICIPATION
OF THE PEACE CONFERENCE, FONMIN EBAN REVEALED THAT A PEACE
PROPOSAL WITH EGYPT IS READY...HE REMINDED HIS LISTERNERS OF
THE 38-CLAUSE DRAFT PROPOSAL PREPARED IN 1971...EBAN BELIEVES
THAT THE SAME DRAFT PROPOSAL IS STILL PRACTICAL...THE QUESTION
REMAINS WHAT EGYPT--OR ANY OTHER COUNTRY---UNDERSTANDS BY
PEACE...THIS QUESTION COULD ALSO BE ASKED OF THE US...SINCE
TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE PEACE CONFERENCE ISRAEL STILL DOES NOT
KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT..."

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